6: Tomasic E-4 (1947-1948) 1953 RF1 Great Russia RF1

his power over others, so unshakable is his belief in his own sovereignty. . . . There is tremendous strength in *Boris Godunov*, the part I would sooner play than any of the others of my repertory. Here again the Russian temperament is overwhelmingly manifest in the seditious license of the boyars, as it is in the boundless autocracy of Ivan the Terrible. It appears also in the lawlessness and drunkenness of Prince Galitski, one of the chief characters of Borodin's admirable opera *Prince Igor*. Galitski's excesses are as extreme as his cynicism.[9]

Some observers of Great-Russian music find in it traits similar to those of Great-Russian belles-lettres. According to Leroy-Beaulieu the Great-Russian music shows an "alternation between extreme emotionality and extreme peacefulness."[10] And according to General Golovine this music is a "combination of the vague and salient softness and harshness of sound, deep sorrow and uncontrolled gaiety, dreams and drama, restlessness and calm . . ."[11] Golovine specifically referred to the music of Glinka, Chaikovsky, Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakoff, and Rachmaninoff.

Extremes of self-aggrandizement followed by self-maceration, murder followed by tears, is noticeable also in the Russian folk psychology. The Great-Russian folk songs, for instance, are often full of cruelty, but are also heart-breaking and plaintive, full of sadness, melancholy and tragedy, sung in minor key. In folk tales and folk songs about Stenka Razin, this robber-bandit is represented both as magnanimous and cruel, as savage and pitiful. He revolted against those in authority, but rallied the poor and rebellious beneath his banner. At the same time he himself showed traits of barbarism and of self-laceration. One of the popular Russian folk songs, tells us, for instance, how once Stenka, "drunk with wine and mirth together," lifted the Persian Princess, his beloved "new-vow bride," over the side of his barque and flung her "forth into the hungry deep" of the Volga, as "a gift from a Cossack of the Don." Stenka acted in such a violent manner because some of his comrades had scornfully reproached him that in his affection to his bride he behaved like a *baba* (woman).

II

A number of interpretations are offered for such behavior.[12] Most of these explanations are either "geografic" or "cultural-

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attention of the world as if through the magic of an irresitible charm. 114

We are, however, concerned directly with Russian art only in so far as it reflects those primitive impulses which give it character and individuality. These things are the very soul of the people's songs, and the customs of which those songs are an integral element. It was a happy idea to bring the marriage customs of these people on the stage and thus to give us a beautiful object lesson in the scientific study of which I have spoken. Books, paintings and musical performances have done much to make us understand Russian thought and feeling, but nothing could be devised to vitalize this understanding better than a dramatic representation of the chief incidents of the wooing and wedding as they have existed from time immemorial. The antiquity of the ceremonial observances is indicated in the relics of savagery which they contain—the obvious modification of marriage by theft or capture and marriage by purchase. The subservience of wife is characteristic of the patriarchal system still prevalent; but there are not wanting suggestions of a much earlier system when descent was traced in the female line and the husband became a member of the family, or gena, of his wife. 121

But it is not my purpose to dwell on this, to which reference will be found hereafter in the description of the wedding ceremony. I am more directly concerned with the music of the songs which occur in the course of the ceremony. The predominant note of Russian music is profound melancholy. This is true even of songs with which the maiden friends of the bride beguile their labors during the *devitchink* at which the wedding garments are prepared. As a rule climatic and geopraphical conditions explain the prevalence of the major or minor mode in folk-music. Thus the music of all Europe above the southern line of the North Sea is predominantly minor. South of that line it is major except in Russia. Even in the Oukraina the melancholy mode prevails. It is obvious, therefore, that the question is not distinctly one of latitude, but of the consequences of latitude. Suffering is a familiar idea to people living in the cold, gloomy and rugged northland; and the symbol of suffering in 633

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533 music is the minor mode. But suffering from climatic and geographical conditions has its analogues in suffering produced by other causes, and this fact sufficiently accounts for the melancholy burden of the songs of the Russians who live in the sunlight of nature's smiles. A special cause of the mournfulness of the songs of the *devitchink*, moreover lies in the circumstance that once they dealt with things which were in themselves mournful. Formerly marriage, to the maiden, meant being sold or given into involuntary servitude. She was not consulted about the match, which implied not only permanent separation from parents and friends, but also possible ill-treatment by her husband and his family against which there was no sure safeguard but death. In the *Lootschina*, sung in the first scene of "A Russian Peasant Wedding," one of the most beautiful as it also is one of the most truthfully expressive of Russian folk songs, one may hear the voice of suffering caused by the persecutions of the Russian mother-in-law. "It is sad and joyful on a quiet summer's night," says Tolstoi, "in the midst of a wordless forest, to hear the wide-sweeping song of the Russians. In it is yearning without end, without hope, also power invincible, also the fateful stamp of destiny, iron preordination, one of the fundamental principles of our nationalty with which it is possible to explain much that in Russian life seems incomprehensible. And what, besides, may not be heard in that drawling song in the summer night and the silent forest? . . . We are like the sharp arrow; it flies from the string, where the hard point pierces there is its home. . .. . Clouds concealed the moon, the wind shook the tops of the linden trees, and scattered blossoms in an odorous rain on the prince and on Yelena. The old branches trembled, as if wishing to say, 'For whom do we blossom, for whom do we blow?'"

[584 562]

Along with the gloom of the folk-music of Russia, however, we find a boisterous humor—the humor which whirls us off our feet in the *scherzos* and *finales* of the Russian symphonists. The phenomenon is startling but not inexplicable. The most profoundly melancholy composers that have ever lived have also been the maddest ones. So under the conditions of their life the

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music of the peasants of Russia, swings from the one extreme of deepest melancholy to the other of desperate and reckless hilarity. This tone has capital expression in the dance song *Kamarinskaya*, which Glinka made famous the world over by his admirable orchestral fantasia. 533

Out of the communal village system which prevails in Russia has probably grown two peculiarities which distinguishes Russian folk-song from that of all other peoples. It is always sung in harmony and it is frequently antiphonal between solo and chorus. The structure of the harmonic fabric is unique, moreover, in that it is polyphonous. The harmony, which seems to lie in the consciousness of the singers, is not highly developed in respect of variety, but occasionally effects of singular power and charm result from the method which has been adopted for the purpose of securing the desired polyphony. The harmony voices are improvised and the basis of the improvizations is free imitation of the melody.

H. E. KREHBIEL.

New York, September 20, 1893.

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SONGS OF GREAT RUSSIA.

A. KHOROVOD SONGS.

(CHORAL DANCE.)

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1. THE AUTUMN NIGHT.

(*Notchka.*)

Oh, thou dark autumn night,
Thou dark night, and not the last one.
A young and sorrowful maiden,
Here I sit and wait all alone,
I lie down, feeling lonesome ;—
Sorrow and worry overcome me,
Worry about my dear lover.
My lover lives far away,
On the other side of the river.
My dear one walks on the other side,
And waves his right hand to me,
With his black hat in the hand.
"Come over," says he, "to this side!"
I would like to come, but I find no ford ;
I found a crossing, but it is over a pole,
And that pole is thin and the creek is deep,
And the water is so awfully cold in it.

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The musical construction of this song is based on the principle of *imitation*, which denotes the repetition of the principal melody in harmonic variations, for the secondary voices. The tune is very simple, consisting of a descending scale of notes, in groups of four, and the different voices are beautifully interwoven. The effect is very characteristic and fine.

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2. DUCKY DARLING.

(*Outitza.*)

Oh, ducky, my darling,
Down by the meadow,
My own young one,
Where have you been?
Where did you stay?
Last night, in the woods,
By the willow trees,
Under the raspberry bush,
There saw I pass,
Two bold young men,
Not married yet.
They each had a knife,
They cut shoots off the willows
And made whistles of them.
Oh, whistles, blow not so loud,
Wake not my father dear.
Do not disturb my mother,
Who is over the river,
Brewing beer for the son-in-law.

The principle of *imitation* is also very strongly carried out in the melody of this song, so as to make each part of it important. [533]

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3. THE GREEN FOREST.

(*Zelionaya rostcha.*)

The green forest roared the whole life-long night,
And I, poor young maiden, did not shut an eye;
I dreamt not, I slept not, I sat up and spun;
And while I was spinning, so lazy I felt—
I felt very tired, with grief overcome.
I had been invited to come to a feast,
To come to a wedding, my false lover's own.
My lover was handsome, so curly and fair,
The horse that he mounted went proudly along.

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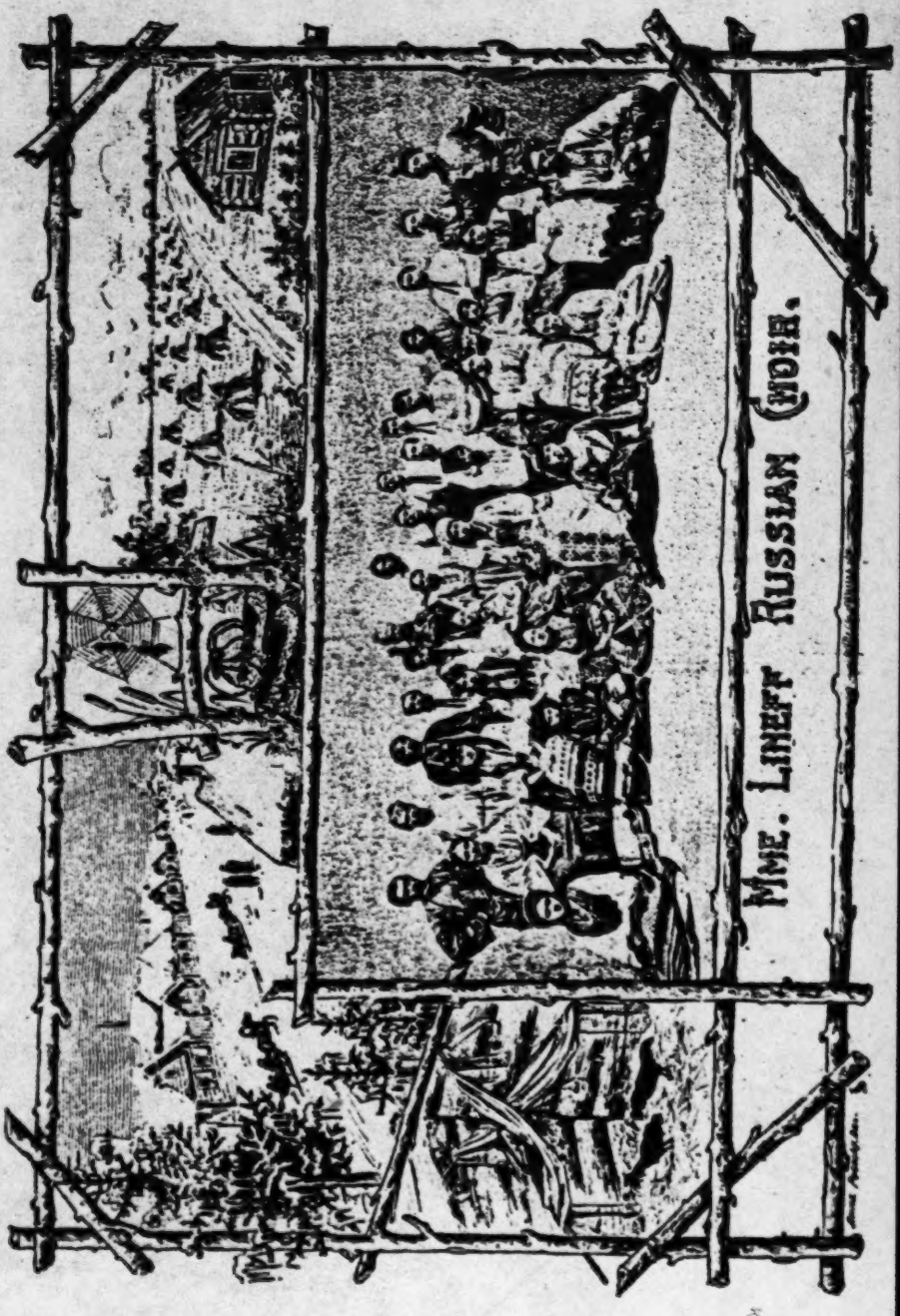

[pp. 32-33]

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The Mustaches have met in the grogshop,
And sat down in a circle by themselves;
The biggest Mustache was the chief of them all,
Gryshka Mourishka, a nobleman's son.

And he says, stroking his mustaches:
"Brethren mine, you bold Mustaches,
"The summer is passing, the winter is near,
"And we must consider how we will feed our bellies."

"Go, boys, and grind up your axes,
"Have the blacksmith make pikes for you,
"Whet your long knives to a good edge—
"For we shall need all these weapons soon."

"I know of a man who is very rich,
"And he lives on a mountain far away;
"He does not plow, but has wheat to sell,
"And the money for it he puts in a box."

[534] In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries organized bands of robbers were frequent in Russia and were a ready refuge for young men, unable to bear the petty restrictions of law and custom at home. As they also often were protectors and avengers of the poor, they were rather popular with the masses: the strain of romance in their mode of life added to the regard in which they were held. For these reasons the number of robber songs, which passed amongst the people was quite great.

Mustache was probably the nick-name of some robber chief, adorned with particularly long mustaches, and his gang may have been called after him—the Bold Mustaches.

[533] A peculiarity of the robber songs is that they are hardly ever executed as solos; many other songs are used by a single voice as well as choir, but these it is customary to render by many voices together. This fact evidently is directly connected with the essence of the subject, which they deal with, as robbers did their work also in organized bands.

This same feature is observed in the laboring songs, which are translated herein; they also must be sung by a choir, as the work must be done by a gang of men together.

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000 a thing of the past. We mean by this that the people—not the musically trained minority—of most European nations have lost the faculty of creating new musical themes, worthy to take rank as addition to their musical lore. The old songs and poetry are forgotten and do not form, as in earlier days, a portion of the artistic heirlooms of each family, generation after generation. Although every nationality has made valiant efforts to preserve in writing the remnants of its old songs, yet it is not at all certain that with the help of such collections we can form a true idea of the folk-songs and the manner in which they were sung *by the people* in olden times. Several circumstances concur to strengthen this doubt. The old collectors of folk songs, as a rule, were not trained musicians, so that often the melodies and the rythm were not correctly noted down. Any amateur who has tried his hand at this kind of work knows with what difficulties it is attended. It is as if an amateur painter should attempt to make a picture *of some complicated building, without knowing anything about* the law of perspective. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that all the old collectors were content merely to note down the principal melody and the words, leaving out the accompanying voices as superflous. The more recent publications of the same folk-songs were usually harmonized or provided with accompaniments by professional musicians who never heard the songs performed by the people, and moreover entertained a certain professional prejudice in musical matters. The musical lyre was silent, the jolly performers a thing of the past; and there was no means of comparing the real thing with its assumed presentment in books on musical folklore. Consequently, with regard to real *people's music* we are as much in the dark as about the music of the old Greeks; some scientific authorities affirming that the choruses in the classical tragedies were sung in unison, while others maintain that they were sung in fifths, etc.

814 533 The most valuable addition to the musical folklore and the art of collecting songs have been made by Russian collectors during the last twenty years. An immense energy and almost devotional love for art were requisite to accomplish this result. As an example of an ideal collector of Russian folklore, we may

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mention Pavel Yakoushkin, a nobleman of culture and means, who spent all his life amongst the humble classes, frequenting public houses, country taverns, fairs, etc., in order to obtain access to the great source of folklore, the Russian peasantry. In the tattered costume of a country peddler, coarse patched boots and headgear to match, he crossed and recrossed Great Russia in all directions, singing with his beautiful tenor voice the songs he loved best, and collecting fresh ones. Then of a sudden he would appear in Moscow to unburden his soul before his admiring friends and various scientific societies of the new material he brought with him. He would delight the few real connoisseurs of the national music by his masterly singing, and then disappear for years in the mass of the peasantry and laborers. The result of his life's study is a classical collection of Russian songs and ballads (words only), the most complete and reliable work of this kind ever produced.

With such an example, and no lack of enthusiastic song collectors amongst the educated classes; with the most beautiful music lore still flourishing, it was only natural that the musicians soon entered the field and surpassed the old traditional collections of Russian folk songs.

Russia possesses about the oldest musical collection of songs, the more important of which, by Pratch, was published at the end of the last century. This work was followed by similiar publications of Kirsha-Daniloff, Kashin, Ssacharoff and many others. Pratch was considered for a long time the classical book on Russian folk songs, but we must add that it shared the same faults which have been mentioned with reference to European collections. The old Russian collectors, without exception, were quite ignorant of the fact, that the scales, and consequently the intervals, used by the Russian people are different from those adopted by musicians of Western Europe; accordingly, in order to bring uniformity, melodies had to be "doctored," the mistakes of the people "corrected," sharps and flats added, the rhythm altered, and the song generally "improved" according to the scientific notions of the collector. And to add insult to injury, a piano accompaniment was provided of chords in true Italian *canzonetta*

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fashion! What wonder, then, that a Russian melody thus polished and "improved" should sound quite strange to the ear of the people, and artificial and commonplace to students? True, some fragments of the beautiful melody were still there, but, on the whole, the soul, the color and the emotional element of the song were eliminated.

As mentioned before, the new school of musicians, aimed at reproduction of folk songs *exactly as they were sung by the people.* This work was carried out with great energy and perseverance; not only were the principal melodies faithfully reproduced and each syllable of the words written down, as pronounced by the singers, but every other part of the accompanying voices was similarly noted. Such reproduction was to all intents and purposes a photograph of the song. This plan was first proposed and carried out with infinite pains by J. Melgounoff, a thorough musician, and now the great Russian authority on folk songs. For some years he carried on his investigations among the peasantry of the province of Kalooga, and for the first time in the annals of musical lore, a set of true folk songs was published in 1879, followed by another volume in 1885. This work accompanied by a theoretical introduction of the principles underlying Russian folk music, produced an immense sensation in the musical and ethnological circles, not only in Russia, but abroad as well. It revealed most characteristic properties in the Russian songs; *natural* scales (major and minor) as basis of the music; and complete polyphony—*i. e.*, each voice in choral songs takes the principal melody slightly modified to suit the polyphonic requirements; the leading voice gives out the principal melody as a kind of solo, and the same thing in turn is done by other voices in true fugue style.

The harmonic treatment in Russian songs is so interesting that an example of it will not be out of place. As an instance, we will take "Notchka"—a *Khorawod* (choral dance) *song*, which stood usually first in the programmes of Mme. Lineff's concerts.

It is evident that each voice is reproducing the same melody with harmonic variations, and, if sung separately, the individ-

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uality of the song can be recognized by the most inexperienced hearer. J. Melgounoff noticed when analysing the singing of large peasant choirs, that almost each singer joins the choir with a somewhat modified melody, not two singing alike, but always improvising some new variation of the same melody; hence that

wonderful harmonic fullness which is characteristic of Russian peasant singing. The peasants call each subordinate voice in the choir—*podgolosok* (*pod*—under; *golos*—voice) and by noting them down, Melgounoff found a rich source of melodic variations and in his now famous collection of "*Russian songs as sung by the people*," some of them are accompanied by dozens of such

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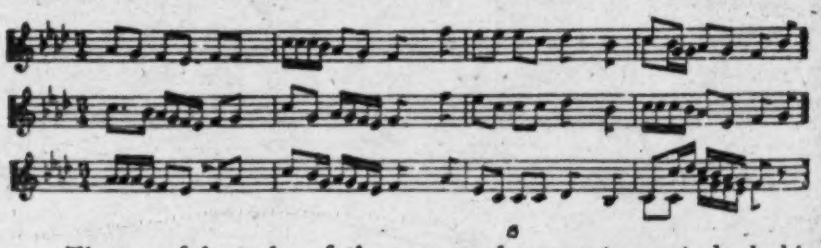
podgoloskies or improvised parts. The following parts from "Notchka" will serve as an example:



The careful study of these secondary parts or *podgoloskies* by Melgounoff was a great step forward in the studying of Russian folk-music, as it gave means to reproduce *exactly* the melodic and harmonic conception of the song as it existed in the consciousness of the people themselves. It is a matter of regret that the songs of other nations had not been treated in the same scientific manner when the folk-songs were still a living reality. Fortunately for Russia, where the natural part-singing is not yet extinct and in some remote parts even flourishing, this kind of study is still practicable and is pushed vigorously by a band of young and enthusiastic investigators.

A great movement was started in order to find means to carry on this work of investigation systematically in various parts of Russia. Since then very valuable additions have been made to the collection of musical lore, notably by Messrs. Lopatin and Prokoonine for Great Russia, and Mr. Lissenko for South Russia (Oukraina).

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To this faithful band of investigators belongs Mme. Lineff, with the difference that her training and experience as choir conductor eminently fitted her to make a powerful propaganda of these exquisite songs, not by mere books, but with a choir of singers trained by her, and therefore appealing to a much larger audience.

Mme. Eugenie Papritz-Lineff is a native of Moscow. Very early she showed a talent for music, and when a mere child she sang melodies heard from her mother, who is an accomplished musician, and pupil of the great Russian composer Michael Glinka.

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Mme. Lineff received her education in "St. Catherine's Institute for Daughters of Nobility," and showed such aptitude for singing, that at the age of fourteen she was selected as assistant conductor of the church choir of the institute, and later superintended the practice of a choir of over one hundred pupils. After having gained at the final examination the highest honors of the institute, she remained as conductor of the choir for nearly two years. She then went to St. Petersburg to study singing at the Conservatory of Music, and later to Vienna to become a pupil of the celebrated Marchesi, with whom she studied three full years.

MME. EUGENIE LINEFF.

In Vienna she met Anton Rubinstein, who invited her to sing at his musical *soirees*. One evening she brought with her some of Rubinstein's beautiful Persian songs. "Oh, no, no!" he exclaimed, good-humoredly, "enough of this trash; let us have some really *good* music; sing us something of Schubert!"

Her *debut* was in the farewell concert of the violinist Ole Bull. In consequence of a favorable notice from such musical critics as Dr. Hanslick and Dr. Schelle, she was engaged by an operatic company in Hungary, which engagement was followed by another from her Majesty's Italian Opera Company in England. Her *debut* in Russia was in the concerts given by the Moscow Syphonic Society under the direction of the late Nicholas Rubinstein, which was followed by an engagement at the Imperial Opera House in Moscow.

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The strong Liberal tide which swept over the best part of Russian society subsequent to 1860—the year of liberation of serfs in Russia—was not without a radical influence on Russian art, especially music. The study of national songs and poetry was cultivated energetically by a band of enthusiasts. Mme. Lineff became a diligent worker in this field. In summer she used to live amongst the peasantry in some out-of-the-way places, studying the best and purest Russian singing. It is an unquestionable fact that in Russia all the principal outward adjuncts of modern civilization—large towns, factories, railroads, hotels, etc. —exercise a blighting effect on the beautiful old folk-song. This disappears at the sound of the steam whistle, and is gradually superseded by commonplace melodies with stupid words, not seldom of doubtful propriety.

Several summers were thus spent by Mme. Lineff, in various parts of Russia and Oukraina, her aim being to compare the different styles of singing in various provinces. She also traveled a good deal on foot with female pilgrims to the various convents held in veneration by the Russian people, to study the peculiar songs of the wandering psalmodists (*Kaleyky-Perekhazie*) who frequent those places.

During her residence in Moscow, while still singing in concerts, her energy was directed particularly to the organization of choirs in schools, amongst university students—male and female —and amateurs. The folk songs were cultivated assiduously, and became the favorite pieces on the programmes. Mme. Lineff still uses a baton presented to her by the University Choir, which she directed during five seasons.

In 1890 she took up her residence in London. In one of the aristocratic gatherings at which she appeared she made a bold experiment by singing for an encore a Russian folk-song, "Lootchina," without accompaniment. The effect produced by the song was striking; she was surrounded by people eager to know the name of the composer and the author of the words. The surprise was still greater when the artist had to answer that the author both of the words and music was the Russian People, and that the date of its composition was quite unknown, and

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might have been contemporaneous with England's dependency under the Roman Empire.

So began Mme. Lineff's active propaganda of Russian folk songs abroad. She earnestly believes "that nowhere the originality and the wonderful effect of the beautiful songs of her land can be better appreciated than by the American public—so justly eager for novelties of merit."

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Before analyzing the typical Russian folk-songs contained in the programme of Mme. Lineff's concerts, I will say in few words on the lectures of Mr. H. E. Krehbiel, the well-known musical critic of the New York *Tribune*, who introduced these folk-song concerts to the American Audiences, and explained the significance and importance of the folk music in general. "The study of this branch of science," he said, "has a great value not only from a musical point of view, but also as a means of obtaining new and valuable ethnographical and philological data. If it be truly said that speech is often used to conceal the real intention and feelings of the speaker, then it is really true that music reveals the innermost feelings and real life of the soul. Folk songs can reproduce to our minds pictures of social and family life in ages gone by, far more vividly than any treatise on the same subject. For the music of folk songs necessarily reflects the inner life of the people who evolved it. Like physical and mental habits, occupations and dwellings, its characteristic traits are the product of the geographical, climatic, social and political condition of the people. The people of Russia are intensely musical. All the significant features in the life of the Russian peasant are accompanied by ceremonies in which song plays a very important part. In the character of these ceremonies and the allusions found frequently in the songs may be discovered relics of ancient customs and religion. This point was illustrated by the performance of a Khorovod (choral) song, in which can be found the remains of the primitive drama, as it was developed among all the civilized peoples. The parallel can be followed through the religious dances of the ancient Egyptians and Greeks, and of the Teutons of the Middle Ages in Europe. Children's games of to-day in Germany, England and America may also be

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regarded as a degenerate form of the old ceremonies which once in Germany and England were performed by adults as they still are in Russia."

The programme of the concerts of Mme. Lineff was made up of the most characteristic and beautiful songs which the soil of Great Russia and Oukraina has produced. It was, however, only a very slight portion of the rich *repertoire* of Mme. Lineff's choir. Her original plan was to give a series of three concerts: one embracing exclusively songs of Great Russia; the second, songs of Oukraina; and the third concert was intended to illustrate the modern music of Russian composers in its relation to the folk songs. But for reason of practicability, the three concerts were provisionally curtailed and incorporated into one.

IN OUKRAINA.

The type of Oukraina songs differ considerably from those of Great Russia. Although just as melodious as the latter, the harmonization of Oukraina songs resembles much more the treatment usual in Western Europe, *i. e.*, by means of chords, and consequently the various parts of the score have nothing in common with the principal melody but are mere "filling in" for the sake of forming the necessary chords. Thus the whole character of the Oukraina songs gives an impression of a more modern origin, and the charm of strict polyphonic treatment, so prominent in Russian songs, is missing: The reason of this is not far to seek: the peasants of Great Russia perform their songs exclusively *a capella*, while in Little Russia a "bandura"—an instrument of the guitar tribe performs the usual accompaniment.